

# franciscan

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*The Good Samaritan, by Rembrandt*

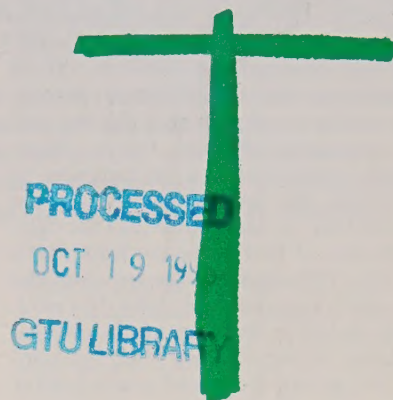
## Servant Ministry – A New Testament Perspective

by Joy Dawn Tetley

“Where I am,” says the Jesus of John’s gospel, “there my servant shall be also” (*John 12.26*). According to the Fourth Evangelist, these words were spoken by Jesus after his entry into Jerusalem on a donkey’s colt. Accompanied by ecstatic words, he had come into the holy city as its king, acting out Zechariah’s prophecy of a triumphant yet humble ruler who would come to bring peace and exercise universal dominion.

Though, as ever, his disciples didn’t quite understand what was going on, they must have caught the thrill of excitement, the fever of anticipation that something

momentous was about to happen. And *they* were his specially chosen ones – he was sure to share with *them* the glory and power that was coming to him.



### Ministry

Franciscans, after all, are Christians – they follow Jesus the Master who, as the First Order Principles remind us, ‘took on himself the form of a servant’. Canon Joy Dawn Tetley writes movingly on Servant Ministry in the New Testament. Father Michael Robson, friar and scholar, gives us an insight into the service of the first friars. Michael Jacobs helps us to look inwards at the human energies at work in pastors. First Order sisters and brothers describe their work.

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So he did - and through the momentous events soon to follow. But what an agonising victory it turned out to be. These disciples, these servants of the prophesied king come to claim his own, had some very hard lessons to learn. Jesus, their lord and master, was a king - but a king on God's terms. And those terms were almost unbelievable - laughable, according to the world's standards. King Jesus submitted himself to shame and spitting; king Jesus let himself be savagely abused, both verbally and physically; king Jesus refused to exercise sovereign power to defend himself; king Jesus was a servant.

Whose servant? God's servant: the one who fulfilled and surpassed the inspired servant prophecy of Isaiah. For, as John so tellingly communicates at the beginning of his gospel, this Jesus, God's servant, the servant king, is none other than the self-expression of God in human form (*John 1.1, 14*). "Whoever sees me sees him who sent me", says Jesus in *John 12 (v45)*. When we look at Jesus, we see the essential character of our amazing God: the Lord who is a servant; the servant who is Lord of all.

And Jesus is the servant leader whom Christians are bound to follow. When we look at his vocation, we see our own; for we must be where he is. All Christians are called to participate in the life and ministry of God, the God who speaks and is enfleshed in Jesus. The whole people of God, the Church, is invited to be with Jesus - and so to be where God is.

Where is that? Paradoxically, both on the edge and in the middle. We do well to remember often that when the great God of heaven came down to this earth, he lived for the most part in obscurity, he carried out his public ministry without any formal qualifications or sanction from the religious powers-that-be, and he was for ever associating with the marginalised, the despised, the wayward and the vulnerable. In so many ways, he was *not* a product of the system - which is why the system crucified him. The ministry of God proves to be surprising, shocking and challenging, even as it releases the potential for reconciliation, life, joy. It gets to the heart of things, to the centre, to the middle.

In a house in Capernaum, Jesus took a child in his arms, stationing himself and the child in the middle of his disciples (*Mark 9. 33-37*). Characteristically, it seems, those disciples (privileged, chosen ones) had been arguing as to who among them was the greatest. So Jesus sits in the middle of childish ones with a child. The fact that he stays there is important on a number of levels. It shows Jesus' tender understanding for the child, who is clearly not very old and might well feel very frightened to have been suddenly dumped on his own in the middle of a large group of men. It also shows that Jesus was deliberately identifying with the child.

Why a little child? At that time, children in Jewish society had no formal status, no legal rights. They were at the mercy of their parents an adult society in general. They had no independent power. Valued as they might be (especially if they were boys!) they had no recourse if, for some

reason, their value ran out. It's not without significance that one of the commonest words for 'child' (the diminutive of which is used here) is also one of the commonest words for 'servant': in Greek, *pais*.

Jesus, the undoubted leader, identifies with the child, with the servant - with the one who in earthly terms is virtually powerless and very vulnerable. In the early chapters of Acts, the word *pais* is used of Jesus on a number of occasions, with reference to his relationship with God. Though our English translators usually opt for 'servant' there is an intriguing ambiguity about the word. Jesus is God's servant; Jesus is also God's child.

Being in intimate relationship with God means sharing God's leadership style; a style which turns upside down many of the world's conventions, yet carries far more transforming power than the most dominant of human regimes.

"I am in the middle of you", says Jesus at a very poignant moment in Luke's gospel, "as one who serves" (*Luke 22. 37*). "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves" (*Luke 22. 25-26*).

*Jesus is the servant leader whom Christians are bound to follow. When we look at his vocation, we see our own; for we must be where he is.*

"I am in the middle of you as one who serves." There is the authentic mark of any kind of Christian ministry, be it lay, diaconal, priestly or episcopal. 'In the middle' - at the centre and heart of where people are - and there, not to dominate and receive adulation, but to serve: to minister, humbly but surely, the life and love of Jesus; and to take the knocks and frustrations this will undoubtedly bring. 'In the middle'; where Jesus is.

On Easter Sunday, according to John, "the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the middle of them and said to them 'Peace be with you' " (*John 20.19*). The trauma of the crucifixion had been utterly devastating for the chosen disciples of Jesus - all the more so because they were not at all prepared for it. Their sights had been on other dreamed-of victories. Into the middle of their confusion and heartbreak, into the middle of their guilt and fear, came the risen Jesus, locked doors no barrier. And what did he bring? Not condemnation. Not even mild rebuke. But peace, and joy; the healing of relationships; the command (despite their former failings) to go out on the Lord's mission; and the power of the Holy Spirit to do it. Quite a visit! When Jesus comes into the middle, situations and lives are transformed. There is a re-creation - the Lord breathing life

into his people and setting them free to bring life to others. With Jesus, wounds become a blessing. With Jesus, our wounds can become a blessing. As with Jesus, and empowered by God's Spirit, our experiences of hell can be taken into, informing and enriching, our Easter mission. In Christ, pain is not denied but transfigured. The world needs to know that.

In *John 20*, Jesus comes into the middle of a situation of great pastoral need. Luke also tells us of an occasion when the risen Jesus came and stood in the middle of his disciples. After reassuring them that he is still the same Jesus they knew, he opens their minds to understand the Scriptures (*Luke 24.36*). Here he exercises a teaching ministry, bringing insight into the truth and purposes of God. And he does it by coming into the middle of his disciples - not haranguing them from a place apart. He starts from where they are. Notice that he 'opens their minds to understand'. No sign here of dominating or indoctrination.

Tucked away in *Matthew 18 (v20)* is a very famous verse which gives us yet another perspective. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name", says Jesus, "there am I in the middle of them." His statement is itself set 'in the middle' of a section on what to do when someone within the fellowship goes astray. So we are into matters of discipline, forgiveness and reconciliation - a very difficult area indeed. "There am I", says Jesus, "in the middle": 'there am I, seeking to minister the reconciling wisdom of God.' And where Jesus is, there his servant must be also, getting involved in the unenviable ministry of reconciliation. Unenviable, because - as Jesus so clearly demonstrates - reconcilers tend to get hurt, even within the people of God.

Whenever Christian ministers are tempted to strut about in self-importance and play God, let them look to this Jesus - the one whose powerful authority comes from the middle of a being totally given over to God; the one who serves humbly from the middle: pastoring, caring, healing, teaching, reconciling, identifying with people at the deepest level, opening up the life of God. That is the 'job-description' passed on to the Church by God in Christ.

There is one reference to add. Talking of Good Friday, the Fourth Evangelist describes how two others were crucified with Jesus that day, one on either side. His description climaxes with a brief yet momentous phrase: "and in the middle, Jesus" (*John 19.18*). "And in the middle, Jesus" - in the middle of the world's sin and pain, in the middle of the world's tragedy and grief, in the middle of the world's cruelty and despair, in the middle of the world's cynicism and corruption; in the middle, as the world's only hope.

"Where I am", says Jesus, "there shall my servant be also."

As George Appleton put it in one of his penetrating prayers to the Lord, "Let the Church bear the sorrow of the world and the wounds inflicted by the world, and know that it is then your body."

*Canon Joy Dawn Tetley is Principal of the East Anglian Ministerial Training Course.*



## One Small Miracle

The land of cancer is a stark  
uncharted country  
At first we were bewildered  
in its wilderness  
But at every turn  
You met us, You were there  
hacking a way for us  
through the undergrowth

One small miracle  
followed another  
(how can any miracle  
be described as small?)  
and all along that journey  
You gave us such good things  
as passed our understanding  
Your attention to detail  
took our breath away.

Now this equally strange  
and frightening territory  
the country of bereavement  
terrifying me with its emptiness  
and loneliness  
is similarly accompanied  
by unexpected and unannounced  
claps of the shoulder  
messages in a bottle  
signs scrawled on a broken piece  
of wood  
sticking up through the sand  
pointing to a place of refreshment

In particular those quicksands  
of despair  
the birthdays and anniversaries  
that I fear will drown me  
have each been hallowed  
by a touch from You  
that now I find awesome  
in their frequency

Standing here today  
in the wind and rain  
give me the courage  
to set out again across the wilderness  
and to wait for Your next move.

**Jenny Gateau**

*Burrswood 24 January 1995  
(written eight months after her  
husband's death at the age of fifty three,  
following cancer of the pancreas)*

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# Ministry of the Franciscans in the Thirteenth Century

by Father Michael Robson OFM Conv.



Saint Francis of Assisi lived the gospel in the most literal fashion and played his part in the renewal of the church in conjunction with the pope and the local bishop. His Rule opens with the friars' pledge to observe the gospel by living in obedience, without property and in chastity and this is followed by the promise of obedience and reverence to Honorius III and his canonically elected successors; the cardinal protector's role was to keep the fraternity faithful to its profession within the church. Those received into the order were to be examined lest they subscribe to heretical views.

Francis's sermons and writings incorporated the papal programme for renewal which was enshrined in the reforming canons of the fourth Lateran Council in 1215. These reforms were carried into almost every city and town in western Europe by the friars whose numbers had increased spectacularly from 1215. While the Rule expressly mentions preaching and missionary work, the friars constituted a highly dedicated and well-trained body of zealous religious, whose talents benefited both the local and international church.

Armed with the approval of Innocent III, the friars began to preach penance and this permission was eventually extended to include more general theological preaching. In the cities of western Europe, their sermons drew large crowds. Saint Antony of Padua's daily sermon in Lent 1231 attracted such huge congregations that it became necessary to retreat from Padua's churches to the open meadows.

In 1238, Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, informed Gregory IX that the friars illuminated the whole country with the bright light of their preaching and teaching. The faithful flocked to them for the word of life, to confess their sins, to be instructed in the rules of living. The friars became itinerant evangelists pledged to take the gospel to all sectors of society. The apostolate of preaching was supported by the friars' work as confessors to all strata of society.

Many of them, like the saintly Hugh of Digne, were invited to preach to the pope and cardinals; others expounded the gospel to the poor in the countryside and to urban populations. In each case their talents and qualities prevented the alienation of large groups who did not receive instruction from their local priests, whose level of theological literacy was low.

Though Francis regarded study as the route to a lucrative career and as a possible source of pride, he had been convinced by the early 1220's that the friars required some theological instruction for their ministry of preaching, especially in areas, such as northern Italy and southern France, where they had to articulate and defend

orthodox teaching. In late 1223 and early 1224, he commissioned Antony of Padua to teach the friars theology, on condition that study did not extinguish the spirit of prayer. Antony, the first lector in the order, taught at Bologna, Montpellier, Toulouse and Padua and his canonisation on 30 May 1232 demonstrated that sanctity and learning were as compatible as they had been for the Fathers of the Church.

His teaching was directed towards the apostolate and the attainment of sanctity and this model spread quickly, especially since he appears to have been the patron saint of the Franciscan schools at Paris, Oxford and Cambridge. The lector's qualities were spelled out by Jean de la Rochelle: the necessary knowledge, personal integrity and doctrine; and Bonaventure taught that the friars study theology in order to advance in goodness.

The friars' theological preparation enabled them to expound the Scriptures in a cogent and imaginative manner in an era



*A very early painting of Saint Francis*



## Theme Prayer



Lord,  
you have taught us  
that all our doings without love  
are nothing worth;  
send your Holy Spirit  
and pour into our hearts  
that most excellent gift of love,  
the true bond of peace  
and of all virtues,  
without which whoever lives  
is counted dead before you;  
Grant this  
for the sake of your only Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Minister's Letter

Sister Cecilia, Minister General  
of the First Order Sisters, writes:

Loving greetings to you all! My gratitude for your thoughts and prayers during my recent surgery; I was deeply aware of your support and concern, expressed in loving messages. Thank you, my Franciscan family.

During times of illness and incapacitation, one is very conscious of 'ministry'. As well as the skill of doctors and nurses, one appreciates being ministered to at home in so many different ways, and the ministry afforded by letters, faxes, telephone calls, flowers and visits.

Ministry can be small, hidden and seemingly insignificant; it can be expressed in large projects, programmes and enterprises. We can set out to minister intentionally, with forethought and planning; we can minister unexpectedly and almost incidentally. Often, we find that in trying to minister to others, we ourselves are receiving far more than we are giving.

Basically, ministry is a form of communication and it is a good thing to ask occasionally, "What am I communicating in this bit of service?"



We know too well the temptation to self-gratification and self-glory in the name of altruism; we often have cause to suspect our motives. We surely long for our ministry to convey nothing less than the love of God, the compassion of Jesus and the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit. May our many and diverse ministries give glory to God.

*Cecilia, O.S.F.*

when poorly instructed clergy were failing to meet the new challenges of the era, especially in the proliferating cities.

On 16 January 1220, the Order gained its first five martyrs, who were executed in Morocco and news spread rapidly, drawing new recruits to the fraternity. From the outset, the friars, whose fervour recalled apostolic times, displayed a remarkable dedication and zeal in travelling great distances in order to propagate and defend Christianity.

### New Recruits

In 1245, Innocent IV sent John of Piano Carpino to the Tartars. Aged about sixty, he rode over 3,000 miles to the heart of the Mongol Empire to avert the threat of invasion and to ascertain whether the Mongols were receptive to Christianity; he was received into the presence of the Great Khan and discovered that there were Christians serving as ministers and clerks in his household.

Several Franciscan legations set out for Mongol territory, culminating in the mission of John of Montecorvino in July 1289. By January 1305, he had built a church in Peking, where he had baptised over 6,000 people and, in 1313, he was consecrated archbishop in Peking. In 1272, John Pecham boasted that no winter has ever prevented the barefoot friars from making long journeys among the Tartars, Greeks and Saracens. Friars promoted and participated in the Crusades. Some of them settled in the East, where they ministered to the Latin communities and shared in the

reverses experienced there; five Franciscans were martyred at the fall of Tripoli in April 1289 and an account of their heroic deaths was carried to England by Hugh, the exiled Franciscan bishop of Byblos.

One of the most important roles which the friars played was in the intermittent bouts of negotiation with the Greek Church. Their theological training, knowledge of the Greek world and their friaries in the East equipped them for this task. In 1233, Gregory IX sent four friars, two Franciscans and two Dominicans, to the East to open theological discussions. Their conversations at Nicaea centred on the procession of the Holy Spirit and the use of unleavened bread in the Eucharist.

*The friars formed a  
sizable body of zealous and  
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vocation lay in the heart of  
the Church.*

The friars were unable to break the theological deadlock and the mission was eventually called off. Towards the middle of that century, further discussions took place and in 1249 a small party set out for the East and included John of Parma, the Minister General, and Thomas, a bilingual Greek lector at Constantinople. In about 1262, a further delegation of four Franciscans set sail; again we know nothing of what took place.

Four friars set out for the Bosphorus on 24 October 1272 to pave the way for the Second Council of Lyons in 1274, where

the representatives of the Eastern Church declared their readiness to accept the primacy of Rome, the *Filioque* clause in the Creed and all the customs of the western Church. The success that was achieved, though short-lived, owed much to the patient work of the Franciscans.

### Pope Friar

While the friars were renowned for their ministry of preaching and hearing confessions, they exercised a broad variety of apostolates and were ubiquitous in the thirteenth century Church: they lived in the most densely populated cities and most remote hermitages; they laboured to spread the truth of Christ and to defend it; they preached and heard confessions at the courts of nobles and kings and visited the sick and the imprisoned.

Both bishops and popes delighted to have them within their households and many served the papacy as penitentiaries, chaplains, envoys, legates, theologians and increasingly as bishops; for a short time both the Pope, Nicholas IV (1288-1292) and the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Pecham (1279-92) were friars. The friars formed a sizable body of zealous and highly-gifted men whose vocation lay in the heart of the Church. Their prophetic role enabled them to voice misgivings about the disputes. They strove to combine fidelity to the ideals of the founder in a changing world with a commitment to the dissemination of the gospel.

*Father Michael Robson, OFM Conv.  
Dean, St Edmund's College, Cambridge*



# Power in the Pastoral Relationship

by Michael Jacobs



**'We of the ministering professions shall not be delivered from evil. But we can learn to deal with it.'** This sentence, in a book called *Power in the Helping Professions*, reminds all who minister, whether in the Church, schools, medicine, social services, or in voluntary and other agencies that those who see themselves as serving others are not themselves immune from all the difficulties which they wish to help other people overcome.

These words also preface an examination of a special difficulty in those who minister, which is less likely to be a problem for those they serve: because the pastoral relationship is ripe for the abuse of power over those whom it seeks to serve: pastoral ministry carries its own insidious attractions, similar to the wish for political power at the start of Christ's own ministry.

It is inevitable that relationships involve issues of the balance of power, and if it is rare for power to be symmetrical, so also it is rare for it to be completely one-sided. Indeed, it is the hint of power in the person who appears in the weaker position in the pastoral relationship which is the first hold in helping strengthen their ability to take control of issues for themselves. Thus a baby, who is in most respects at the most powerless position in life, also has a powerful pair of lungs, and hopefully learns that crying is the way of making needs felt, and that others will respond. That is an important lesson in life.

Those who seek help from pastoral care in adult life also have power - in taking the first step, they show some willingness to take responsibility. Like a child's, their power is often limited and it is a power which can easily be abused, by neglect, (passing by on the other side) or by domination (equally common in human relationships). The most creative pastoral relationships are those which empower people to find their own ways (however limited these may be by physical mobility, age or social position) of recognising and meeting at least some of their needs in the situations in which they find themselves.

Sometimes this includes using the power that comes from the status of being the helper, not upon those who seek help but upon those who hold more powerful positions in society.

There is, then, nothing wrong with power in the pastoral relationship: the danger lies more in the subtle use of power, hidden in the illusion that ministering means serving others (or serving God, or serving God through serving others), and that this comes from pure altruism and the pure expression of faith and love. Service is not so simple. For a start, the inevitable power imbalance in the pastoral situation is reinforced by one person asking another to lend, give or teach them knowledge, expertise, material assistance, psychological support, or any combination of these.

Temporarily, the person seeking help is in the inferior role of suppliant, whilst the minister is put in the role of the expert, the one who knows how to help or 'who knows someone who can.' Furthermore, the training of every minister (whether in the Church or in other caring professions) now rightly emphasises the need for knowledge and expertise. This training reinforces not only the expertise of the minister but also inflates a sense of knowing what is right for people: for example, what is right belief, right behaviour and right relating. There is an illusory quality to this too, because experience suggests that nothing is that simple; but the illusion leads to collusion, feeding into the wish for answers that is so often expressed by those who desperately seek support.

On top of this, we need to consider the ways we impart pastoral care, which partly takes its lead from the good and bad examples of those who taught us and upon whom we consciously and unconsciously model ourselves (it is suggested that professionals who abuse the power relationship have themselves often been abused by their teachers), and partly as well as from our own personal issues.

## Exerting Power

While the obvious abuses of power in the pastoral relationship come through the wish to dominate and direct, and even to invade the personal and physical space of the other, there are many more subtle ways of exerting power over the people who trust us to help them. I can speak best for counsellors and therapists, as the helping profession I know well: for example, this subtle abuse of power can be managed through the pretence of non-directiveness, whereas in fact the counsellor picks up certain words and feelings and reinforces or challenges them and lets others pass, pushing the client towards the counsellor's own agenda and preoccupations; and this is done with the best intentions of helping the client.

I can also think of psychotherapists whose training leads them to think they have got the unconscious taped (what omnipotence!) and who confidently interpret the unconscious meanings of the material their patients give them.

Training and expertise is power. So too is

the status of being a helper. Guggenbuhl-Craig, the author of *Power in the Helping Professions*, writes of the shadow side in the wish to help others. He suggests an excellent way of spotting the shadow side in ourselves, by taking seriously the negative names that other people call our profession when they are being critical of it: for example, doctors are sometimes called 'quacks': people who pretend they know the answers to medical problems and who sound very confident, but in truth peddle useless medicines.

Perhaps, indeed, this is the shadow side of the doctor, who has to be careful not to prescribe half-truths or coloured water as a way of retaining clinical authority with the patient. Following Guggenbuhl-Craig's example, which is only to be critical of his own profession, I hesitate to pursue further examples, but simply ask whether the names that clergy, Christians or pastoral helpers are called do in fact reveal the possibility of the shadow side of care: names like hypocrites, unworldly, naive, do-gooders, nosey parkers, etc. By listening to what the critics say, and examining such a list of unattractive epithets, there are pointers to the shadow side of pastoral ministry. Guggenbuhl-Craig suggests another avenue for looking at the unconscious power relationship of the helper: what has been repressed or suppressed in us in our training, and in our vocation?

## Anger and Hatred

Might these 'nasties' sometimes shine through, more visible in us to the person who seeks our help than they are to us? Certainly, one of those aspects - anger and hatred - is often suppressed in the helper, and yet finds its way through in ways we do not ourselves always detect, leaving hurts and scars in those we thought we had cared for.

Finally, there is an expression of power in the pastoral relationship which it is difficult to overcome, so subtle is it, and yet so endemic in all our best intentions. It is illustrated in one of the parables which Jesus told, a story which has at its heart problems associated with forgiveness: the story of the man whose debt ran into many millions, whose master ordered him and his family and his possessions to be sold. But when the man had been forgiven his debt, he caught a fellow servant by the throat and demanded his money back.

Stories such as this can be understood in many different ways, and there is no reason why the way I suggest is any better than the interpretation the reader or the New Testament critic puts upon such a slender plot. Nevertheless, it is possible, if we look at these relationships from a psychological perspective, that one of the reasons why the servant whose debt was remitted was unable to forgive his fellow servant was because he did not himself feel forgiven.

On the surface, he had obviously been let off his debt: his master was generous and apparently forgave him everything. Yet in doing so the master had, in a moral sense rather than a financial one, forgiven one





**Brother  
Kentigern John  
writes:**

Let me tell you how today has been for me. I was up for Morning Prayer at 7.30 a.m., followed by my prayer time. Bill and David are

away at the moment, which leaves me as the only brother here; it's much harder for me to keep a prayer life going on my own, but then that is why I'm in community.

We have a guest staying at the moment, Mike, who is a lifer on home-leave from prison. He doesn't have another 'safe' address so he comes here, otherwise he wouldn't get leave. It's 9.00 a.m. and I'm still rushing with my morning ablutions, despite the fact that I'm supposed to be round at the Sisters of Mercy. I'm there to cover the feeding project for a couple of hours; chat to the people I've got to know, meet new people, referee any fights. It passes off uneventfully and I've had some nice wee chats with some very beautiful people. I'm then on my way to Polmont Young Offenders Institution, where I'm Friday's chaplain.

This has been a difficult job for me, but the lads have been very patient with me and I've been profoundly moved at the trust and openness that is shown to me. It was good to see Donald today who was all bright and cheery: the first time I had met him he had been on suicide surveillance. Eventually home. A day of trying to give quality listening to people who need to be heard. Now I must phone a friend, have a laugh and have a bit of care taken of me.

● *Continued from page five*

debt only to create a different one. He put his servant even more greatly in his debt by wiping the financial slate clean. In the power balance, this servant was doubly obliged to his master, indebted for being let off the financial debt.

The servant could have forgiven his fellow servant his debt, as he himself had been forgiven, and in doing so he could have experienced some relief from his own feelings of indebtedness. But perhaps the feeling of powerlessness towards the forgiving king was translated into restoring the power balance, through displacing it onto another relationship.

Ministers and pastors, who owe so much through their faith to the grace of God, need to be as aware, as others helpers need to be for their own motives, of the danger of putting those they help in their debt, and exerting that power over them which is the shadow side of freely offered service.

*A. Guggenbuhl-Craig*

**Power in the Helping Professions**

Dallas, Texas: Spring Publications Inc. 1971

*Revd Michael Jacobs is the editor of a new book The Care Guide (London: Cassell, 1995) containing over seventy five articles by experts in many fields of care and counselling.*



**Sister  
Christine James  
writes:**

I suppose my day starts like that of most other Franciscans, prayer both private and corporate, followed by breakfast. Then we all go our separate ways. Mine is to walk down to Brixton Underground and to lemming to the tube to Oxford Circus.

*It's important to  
remember that we are not  
dealing with numbers but  
with people . . .*

*helping individuals to  
discern their future in  
religious life*

I work for the National Religious Vocation Centre as a secretary, dealing with mail, answering the 'phone and working on a computer to produce a newsletter, leaflets or brochures or to analyse statistics and present them in a form which is easily understood and meaningful. We run an annual survey to find out the number of entrants to (Roman Catholic) Congregations and, earlier this year, we followed up the entrants over the past three years to find out what had happened to them.

It's important to remember that we are not dealing with numbers but with people, those who have entered and the communities which they have entered, as they all try to discern God's will. Part of my role is to give the secretarial and practical support to the Director of the Centre in order to enable her to carry out her job of education and supporting those in vocation ministry and in helping individuals to discern their future in religious life.

That job is part-time. My afternoon could be spent in a variety of ways, working for Churches Together in Brixton, preparing a mailing of news and events or going to photocopy, stuff envelopes and send it out. Occasionally helping others to work their computers, doing work for CSF as Vocation Adviser or Assistant Bursar, doing housework or cooking or gardening, studying or . . . There's always something to be done.

The evenings converge, once more, with other Franciscans: Evening Prayer, supper, a little relaxation (sometimes) and Compline, the prayer undergirding all the varied and often hectic activity of the day.

# 'His ministers

'What do you do all day?'



**Brother  
Desmond Alban  
writes:**

How easy is it to observe the Orion nebula with the naked eye in central Birmingham? That's not a question one necessarily expects to address in ministry, but it was what concerned a student and me as a group of us walked to a Balti restaurant. A common interest in astronomy, even without his obsession with Star Trek, is a good basis for a conversation.

One of my placements on the Novice Urban Year is with the ecumenical chaplaincy at Aston University. Mine is very much an informal role, but it is good to join in the various expressions of Christian life on campus. I usually attend the combined Anglican and Free Church worship, where I have led and preached, but I'm also welcome at the Roman Catholic Mass and am due to preach there soon.

A Balti meal is a quite typical way to end a Birmingham evening, and on the occasion mentioned above, we were having a get-together for Anglican students. During the first half of the evening, I had been leading a workshop on creative approaches to prayer.

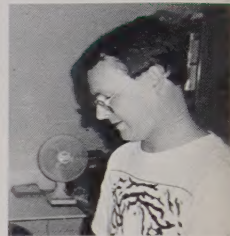
*A common interest is a  
good basis for a  
conversation . . .*

So then, I'm glad to have been given formal opportunities for ministry, but I've also been learning the value of just being alongside Christians here. Indeed, I suspect the weekly ecumenical rendezvous in the Guild Bar may be my most significant time on campus. I also try to get along regularly to Christian Union meetings, and we're pleased with the growing trust between the Chaplaincy and the CU.

It is a privilege to have been made welcome by a team of chaplains who are committed to a vision of bringing Christians together.

**Sister  
Elizabeth  
writes:**

My inner clock and a vociferous blackbird tell me it's morning. Take a look at today: take in a heavenly spring morning and a reminder (on the floor) that X comes





# flaming fire . . . '

## Brothers and Sisters share some of their individual ministries

today at 9.15 a.m. to see me. Things rush to mind: yesterday we heard of a death (I won't be taking that funeral); and of a close friend expecting surgery; I visited someone whose lighthearted courage in adversity is her gift to those who minister to her. And what's on today?

After the 9.15 a.m. appointment, I can look in on the spiritual directors' day (sixty expected and Sheila Cassidy speaking); some will be looking for a chat, then one interview at lunchtime and one at 4.00 p.m. A retreatant this week is seeing me at 6.30 p.m., the house conference, someone to visit Leonore in hospital, letters, I never catch up: Sister A can see the builder; Compton maintenance is like the Forth Bridge. When it's finished, start again! That's life. It's all God's gift; offer it and take it for living.

*So Lord, hand me  
round in all the day's  
doings and may I, like you,  
be totally present to each*

Time for Chapel. Thanks and praise and asking for blessing on us and all that comes. Dear God, bless the infirm with support, the depressed and anxious with comfort, the eager and initiating with gentleness and yours truly with sensitivity and some enabling humour. Help me to remember that 'my' work and ministry are yours!

Time? Never enough! And all in your NOW if I could but keep my fragmented bits right there. We are all broken, as your Body broken daily at the altar. The group is ecumenical and I'm assisting today; priesthood for women has its pains but such events point to our ultimate unity in Christ.

So, Lord, hand me round in all the day's doings and may I, like you, be totally present to each.

**Sister  
Chris  
writes:**

How do you define a deafblind person? I used to think it was clear cut: somebody without any sight or hearing, and yet hopefully with understandable speech! However, when I began fifteen months ago to work for the National Deafblind League as a liaison officer, I realised there were many degrees of deafblindness. And with some people, I am far less able to communicate than with others.

Dolly is one such person. She lost her hearing in adolescence and has depended on



Joyce Yarrow CSF

British Sign Language for the last thirty years. But now that her sight is rapidly failing, she needs to learn to receive finger-spelling on her hand. And our practice sessions are sometimes complicated by my lack of skill with sign language. However, we manage to get by with a laugh, a bit of lip-reading and an educational toy called Magna Doodle! If all else fails, I can write a word onto this magic screen, and when Dolly has peered at it long enough to decipher my giant print, I can clear the screen in preparation for the next word.

*There are many degrees  
of deafblindness and I  
am far less able to  
communicate with some  
than with others*

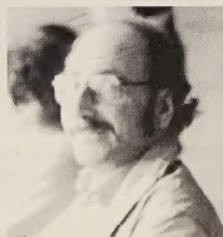
With Flora, communication techniques have to be quite different. She has only light perception and no hearing at all. In fact, in her case, it is I who need to lip-read because Flora has not heard for over seventy years and her speech has become indistinct. Even so, I find communication with her far easier than I do with several of the others I visit, because finger-spelling is much less of a strain on the vocal chords than shouting to someone with limited hearing! Yet all these people need to be given time and understanding. And however severe their disabilities may be, I always sense a quality of life and a tenacity which helps me appreciate how rich is the life which God gives us!

**Brother  
James William  
writes:**

Working in prison ministry is a great leveller in life. The qualities needed are love, perception, a sense of humour and, if in supply, the common touch. The men in prison, being streetwise by nature in crime, quickly pick up if you really care, or whether you are just condescending.

What are the men looking for in terms of ministry from us? Probably one of the most important gifts we can offer is confidentiality and trust. Very often, men will tell you about their past with tides of tears which are never shown to prison staff or fellow inmates, just to you!

You must listen carefully, never judging or giving the impression you are shockable. Ministry could involve the simple task of making a phone call to reassure a man's family that he is genuinely coping after the



trauma and shame of a Court appearance, and finally receiving a custodial sentence. Or again, one of the hardest tasks I had recently was comforting a young Asian guy who during the night-time lock-up was rapped in his cell at knife point.

*We discover God's riches  
in a cathedral, in a  
beautiful sunset  
but also in a scruffy prison  
cell covered in porn*

No two days are ever the same in prison, sometimes enormous pain to face then other times you are rolling with laughter at the black humour that is ever present.

One story especially stands out. A very amusing Irish guy approached me on the landings of the prison saying "Have you got any drugs for me, Brother?" To which I said, "The Chaplaincy doesn't supply those at this moment in time." He continued, "Would you come into my cell?" On entering, I noticed the usual pictures of art of a page three variety displayed on the walls. He said, "I love the Franciscans, Brother. When I lived in Dublin they always gave out food to the poor every morning. Yes, I loved the Franciscans. I'm not religious, Brother, but could you give me a blessing as I'm in Court tomorrow?" As I prayed and laid hands on him, I felt a tremendous sense of God's love around. The experience confirmed for me that, yes, we discover God's riches in a cathedral, in a beautiful sunset, and so on, but also in a scruffy prison cell covered in porn.

The means and the situations in which God uses us in ministry should truly humble us - isn't that just wonderful.

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# Discerning the Vision

**A sermon preached by Brother Anselm SSF  
at the beginning of the Life Professed Meeting  
at Hilfield, 7 June 1995**

A text: Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants."

I am going to offer some thoughts about the value of conflict, but first, let me set the scene: "When blessed Francis was at the General Chapter, known as the Chapter of Mats, because the only shelters there consisted of rush-mats, which were used by five thousand friars, a number of prudent and learned friars went to the Lord Cardinal of Ostia who was present and said to him, 'My Lord, we wish that you would persuade Brother Francis to follow the advice of the wiser brethren, and allow himself to be guided by them.' And they quoted the Rules of Saint Benedict, Saint Augustine and Saint Bernard, which lay down the principles of the regular life.

## New kind of simpleton

The Cardinal repeated all this to blessed Francis who, without making any answer, took the Cardinal by the hand and led him before the friars assembled in Chapter. And he spoke to the friars in the fervour and power of the Holy Spirit, saying, 'My brothers! my brothers! God has called me by the way of simplicity and humility, and has in truth revealed this way for me and for all who are willing to trust and follow me. So I do not want you to quote any other Rule to me, whether that of Saint Benedict, Saint Augustine or Saint Bernard, or to recommend any other way or form of life except this way which God in his mercy has revealed and given to me. The Lord told me that he wished me to be a new kind of simpleton in this world, and he does not wish us to live by any other wisdom but this.'

## Vision and Structure

The Franciscan springtime; the Franciscan birthplace, five thousand brothers led by Francis, who was unable to understand that five thousand people do need structures, as well as a vision.

Francis, an inspirational genius with a compelling presence, a piercing vision, a wonderful eloquence - who really left the brothers to sort themselves out and seemed to feel that any serious attempt to apply prudence and common sense to this logistical challenge was a betrayal of his, of Christ's, ideal.

So God raised blessed Francis in the thirteenth century - and persists in speaking in the hearts of some who follow Francis, us soon to welcome the twenty first century. Other religious founders left

behind a specified and legislated way of life. Francis left what is common to all Christians - Christ's gospel - the gospel life as understood by the simple, those who brought joy to the heart of Jesus. And he left to his sisters and brothers almost total freedom in the matter of how to live it: a recipe for controversy and conflict which, as Brother Edward will tell you, very soon came to pass.

## Direction and Energy

What does this say to us, celebrating the gospel sacrament as we meet to continue the process we call 'Discerning the Vision'? We find a warning and we find a direction and energy. We are warned against the temptation to equate the simplicity of the gospel with a naive and simplistic denial of our humanity. The temptation to suppose that somehow this 'gospel' is going to relieve us of conviction, temperament, frailty, faultiness, and super-envelop us in an imposed humanity in which we shall arrive at the truth - and be protected from controversy and conflict which are also a part of our common humanity.

## Growing in the Gospel

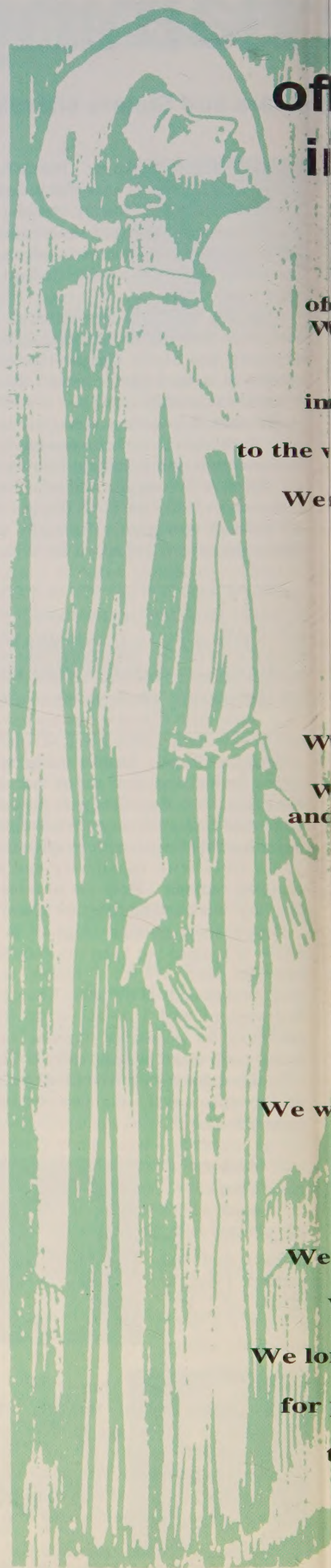
There is no simple, uncomplicated pursuit of gospel truth or of theological truth; there is no final, definitive truth in advance of the beatific vision. We grow in the gospel down the generations through a process of disputation - as true of trinitarian doctrine as it is of Church Order as it is of community structures of SSF.

We have a lot to learn about this dialogue - we have to learn to speak up for our truth, to listen to that of others, to search for what unites, 'to address the chair'.

Amid all this, there is that within the gospel itself which provides energy and direction. At the heart of the gospel is conflict out of which truth emerges - life is born from violent death. The ideal of diaconal service is affirmed in the heart of a controversy about widows - the gospel of grace is forged in the furnace of conflict about circumcision for Gentiles.

## Being Different

Let us not be afraid of being different, because through differences we shall be led to truth, to what is right, to what is God's purpose for us; to the treasure hid in the field, to the pearl of great price; and be found among the simple, who bring joy to the heart of Jesus - as those to whom the Father chose to reveal these things.





# Society St Francis Church

rate the charism  
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ourselves to the quest  
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n women and men  
rch and society.  
Mary, Francis and Clare  
all the saints  
every race, language,  
culture,  
ome to themselves  
o one another  
blessed Trinity,  
be glory for ever.  
Amen!

## Becoming who we are

By Brother Damian SSF

When you hear that more than fifty life professed brothers are having regular meetings down at Hilfield Friary, it may be presumed that there is a new agenda. Certainly it took the houses around the UK some organising to ensure property was safeguarded, the cat fed and the answerphones not clogged with messages.

Surely these big gatherings only take place every six years and the last round had taken place only last September? You are right: but the consequence of last year's General Chapter led to a whole new sequence of events for the brothers.

### Setting the Agenda

Our common quest and somewhat urgent need had been to discern and identify a common vision for the First Order Brothers in this Province. By so doing, we would be in a position to clarify our present priorities and be able to identify the places where and the ways by which we might best respond in both mission terms and in the witness of our common life. Behind us there had come the 1994 Report from our Visitors, with a three-fold message:

a call for renewal in the vocation of each brother;

a review of our formation and study commitments;

a warning that the Society was stretched in its resources and needed to review the number of houses it could responsibly staff.

### Areas of Concern

Over the months of last winter, we set ourselves the task of taking a deeper look at our common life. Some of us met to re-examine our response to the three-fold vow. Some majored on the vital matter of how we train our new brothers, while another group looked to identify opportunities to stimulate an atmosphere in our houses of study, so easily squeezed out of busy lives.

Others specifically were asked to reconnect us to our Franciscan roots. An essential concern for review was our role in the Church, both in an Anglican context and with its urgent calls to both mission and to ecumenical engagement (its strong opening statement is printed opposite). Finally, and I suppose in these latter days inevitably, we needed a careful reappraisal of our structures and how these may be adjusted to our present needs as a dispersed body of brothers living and working in four separate Provinces of the Anglican communion.

The reconvening of the life professed brothers this June was necessary in order to hear the findings of these winter reflections, and it was concluded that two of the days usually set aside for our Chapter work (administered by a smaller group of brothers) should be opened up to the full membership of life professed for an open

review as to how we should move forward.

That meeting received the seven reports. Aided by Archdeacon Malcolm Grundy, who had volunteered to come back to facilitate the business, we were able to identify and agree the essentials in our Society's own vocation. From there, we begin a painful process of recognising where to prune the branches in order to strengthen the SSF plant, and indeed to enable it to shoot out new growth as it becomes stronger to take advantage of this process.

Our structures are in much need of revision. Discovering ourselves to be able to work as a cohesive body, strong recommendations were made for an annual life professed brothers' meeting. This would act both in a consultative role and also have its own agenda, and thirdly it would provide a forum for wider debate and even provide, it is hoped, an occasion for an annual lecture.

Adjustments were also approved concerning the make-up of the elected Provincial Chapter, identifying a more geographically representative membership. We spoke of grouping into four custodies around the British Isles in order that those houses with greater numbers and smaller might engage in occasional events for their mutual support. As we came face to face with the challenges of our staffing problems, it was important that we worked gently and generously with each other, and while no immediate decisions were made last June, it was clear that within the year some decisions must be taken.

### In Trust and Openness

In conclusion, the brothers realised that they had identified ways of conducting their corporate business in an atmosphere of greater openness and trust. Though more mental and physical effort would be required to achieve an annual meeting of all the life professed brothers, such occasions were necessary to share matters which are of mutual concern.

We recognised just how necessary it is today to feed and stimulate each other in all matters that affect our common life, our growth and development as a Province. Perhaps most important of all, we see the benefit in coming together to strengthen each other's faith and vocation for that is why we have been called into community, into a gospel life in which we are to be stewards, servants, ministers - brothers, first in the household of faith and alert to those God will give us to love.



# Community Routes

## ◆◆ Out of Africa

Brother Roger Alexander is living and working at St David's Mission in Bonda, Zimbabwe. He wrote to the Chapter recently, and the Minister felt his letter was worth repeating here:

I write this sitting on the verandah of the Rectory, looking at white butterflies fluttering around the red poinsettia in the garden, appropriate enough for Pentecost.

In spite of the bright sun, it is cold in the shade. This is our winter and at over 5000 feet up we can have ground frost even in Africa. The school students are already wrapping themselves up well for the cold. It is a long term, this one, lengthened even more to make adjustments for the recent General Elections.

We have had again a year of poor rainfall, not as bad as the disastrous one of 1992 but bad enough to reduce the yields of many crops considerably. Maize, the staple, is down to 40% of its normal yield.

The expertise for drought relief learned at cost in 1992 is useful now: stockpiles of

grain are much larger and transport systems for feeding schemes are based on experience.

My own life and work continue to go well, although at times I could do with more leisure and more company. Apart from the usual ministry of services, teaching and pastoral work, with the departure on promotion of the secondary school headmaster, more of the secular work of the mission has come my way.

Last year, the tarred road was extended the last seventeen kilometres or so to the mission. This may mean that we open up a centre for more business on mission land.

The hospital is bracing itself for Phase II of the rebuilding programme. We are moving towards better management of our mission farming land: the delicate matter of illegal settlers is being approached and it is hoped that overall over-grazing will be reduced and soil conservation improved. The Ministry of Agriculture might be giving more support to our farmers in the way of fertilizer and seeds.

I look in on Brother Geoffrey and the Community of the Divine Compassion at

Penhalonga when I can, and some of them occasionally come to Bonda. Visits from SSF brothers are very welcome: Brother Brian enjoyed his visit and we hope to see Thomas Anthony soon.

I am following the process of 'Discerning the Vision' with great interest and hope that the meeting of the life professed brothers goes well. With all good wishes and prayers for our common work in the extension of God's kingdom.

## ◆◆ Friend of the friends

The Companions of the Society have a new Secretary: after three years Brother Philip Bartholomew has handed over to Sister Gina, who lives at 10 Halcrow Street, London E1 2EP.

Companions are Christians who wish to associate themselves with the Society of Saint Francis through prayer, friendship and in seeking to live the spirit of the gospel in the way of Saint Francis. They keep in touch with the work of the brothers and sisters through subscribing to *franciscan* and receiving the intercession leaflet, both of which inform their primary work of prayer.

## ◆◆ Brixton Satellite

From late September, the CSF Brixton household will be increased by two.

This has been made possible by the availability for rent of a two-bedroomed flat, owned by the parish of St Saviour's Brixton Hill. Only a short distance from Endymion Road, it will be possible to operate as the one household for a significant segment of community life.

## ◆◆ 'Pains of quaint device ...'

Before he died in 1990, Brother Lawrence Christopher left instructions that a panel of medieval glass, held by his family for over one hundred years, might eventually find a permanent home in a church of this land. It was of special value to him because the subject of this ancient stained-glass was Saint Christopher carrying the Christ child. Lawrence told us that the panel came originally from Canterbury Cathedral but that, in line with the thinking of the last century, the old glass had been replaced by new (which the Victorians presumably also thought better!).

So it was nineteenth century glass that replaced the medieval and was inserted in our Metropolitan Cathedral. The original for several years had been hanging in the chapel of Saint Francis School for maladjusted boys at Hooke, founded by Brother Owen SSF and closed only two years ago. With the closure, the Minister Provincial began enquiries as to where this glass might find a home. Some offers were received, but then it became known at Canterbury Cathedral itself that the glass was in the care of SSF.

Dr Stobl, the director of the Cathedral studios, hurried to inspect the original glass and with much excitement promised to clean and mount it, restoring it to its original place.

So, at Evensong in the Cathedral on 14 March, attended by Brother Damian,



Kent Messenger Group

Brother Edward and Penelope Christian, the sister of Brother Lawrence (and herself a Franciscan Tertiary), the window was rededicated in its original setting in Saint Edward's Chapel.

The Dean explained their particular delight in receiving the gift, expressing his relief that the glass had survived all the disruptions of its last home at St Francis School and also that, for visitors to the Cathedral, there is now a rare opportunity to compare the stained glass of the two periods, clearly showing which is the superior workmanship!



Joe Darling

Life Profession of Brother David Francis



Obviously, there will need to be a good deal of sensitivity in working out the practicalities. The situation has arisen out of the desire to give novices an urban experience, together with the frequent absence of Joyce and Nan in the course of their Community responsibilities. The flat will be rented for a year in the first instance, and the situation be reviewed at the Pentecost 1996 Chapter.

## ◆◆ Discipleship with Francis

For several years now, two Consider Your Call weekends have been organised each year by the C/SSF Vocations' Team. These events were designed for people wishing to explore a Christian vocation in its broadest sense.

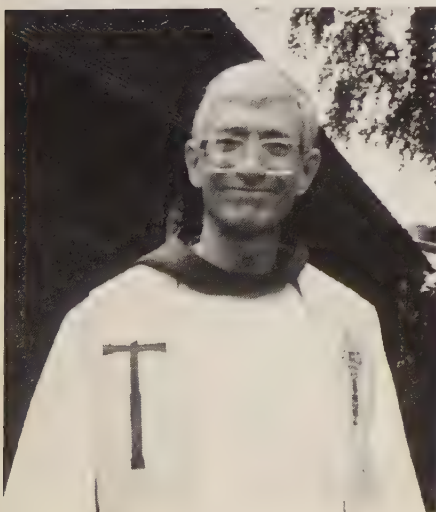
At the last meeting of the Vocations' Team, it was agreed that this kind of weekend had run its course, that a change should be made in the focus. Therefore this year, the last CYC weekends will be held at Hilfield in July and at Alnmouth in September. Next year, they will have a more Franciscan flavour, but the dates for Hilfield and Alnmouth are not yet decided.

## ◆◆ Studious brothers

Jude has received the degree of Master of Arts from the University of Louisiana: his subject was the depth psychology of fairy tales.

Alistair, who is training to be a clinical psychologist, completed the first element of his training last autumn: an M.Phil. in psychopathology from the University of Cambridge. He took the degree at a ceremony in the University's Senate House on 25 March.

Moses Lonsdale, from the Pacific Islands Province, successfully completed his studies at Selly Oak in June. He has now been offered a place to read for a Bachelor of Theology degree at the University of Auckland.



Brother Amos on the day of his Ordination to the Priesthood

## ◆◆ Being here



'Rapunzel, Rapunzel'

Sister Fay, from New Zealand, is staying in the UK for a year or so. She writes:

What is it like being 'up over' if that is the opposite of being 'down under'? Well, the cold wind blows from the north instead of the south. You face south to

see the sun at midday, instead of north (that is, when the sun is to be seen at all). This north/south difference has led to some interesting moments for myself and others, initially, when I have given directions or tried to get my bearings to go somewhere. Disorientated would be a fairly accurate description.

There are lots of other things that are different when coming from another country and culture, yet there are an equal amount that are the same. Certain things have reminded me that I am not in Aotearoa/New Zealand: the history and age of this country and the culture that has evolved from them is very different. It is all so much older!

Because of this it is cherished, which can inhibit the present through holding on to buildings, systems and structures which are no longer helpful in the present. This has highlighted a 'spirit of freedom' that, for me, is part of being a 'Kiwi'. An attitude that means us Aotearoa people are less bound by status and class, where you come from, what your parents did, what type of education you had. I'm not saying that these don't affect people but there is a difference in the way one can be restricted

by them.

There are a lot more people here: crowds, queues everywhere; so much traffic, a normal day's traffic is more like that of a public holiday exit from the city in New Zealand. Because there are more people, there is more of everything and lots more people to support things. There seem to be a greater variety of religious communities to choose from. There are more churches with bigger congregations. Both CSF and SSF are bigger, and the Third Order too. That has been very nice, as it means I have more family here.

On that family note, I want to say that most of the time, since arriving last September, I have felt very at home here in community in Britain. People are very welcoming, friendly, courteous (especially on the roads). It has seemed like home away from home and I have been able to get on with being me here.

The greater population also means diversity: different faith communities with sizeable followings; different cultural groups, due to being in a different part of the world; added to that are the varied cultures of the British, which I hear in the many different accents, which give those who know a clue as to where one comes from. Since September, I have had only a limited experience of the culture, the Church and the community. There may be some things I am missing from Aotearoa, that I haven't found here, because I haven't yet been to the place or met the people that are similar. Plenty of time yet.

At times, the differences do stand out and I realise that I have been shaped by a very different culture, but one which has its roots here in this land, people, history and culture. Yet when it boils down to it, people are the same all over the world. We all have basic needs which have to be met, and we are on the journey of life. Hopefully it is a journey that leads us in harmony with all that is, and into true life.

## ◆◆ Restoring Hope: Mission to Bosnia

When Damian and Thomas Anthony returned from a visit to Zagreb and Sarajevo in February, it was proposed that SSF might respond to an unfulfilled project of the World Council of Churches in Bosnia.

With the prayer and financial backing of several friends of SSF, Thomas Anthony was able to return to Bosnia for eight weeks in April and May to tour several Christian congregations and to assess their welfare after four years of war and lack of basic provisions.

Besides the official report (still in preparation) Tom has clearly been used to give encouragement and express ecumenical concern in places and to people who have been most cut off by the conflicts of many war-torn situations. We thank God he returned safely and can speak with first-hand experience of his *Restoring Hope* mission.

## ◆◆ Servant to the religious life

Brother Bernard has retired after completing seventeen years as a representative of the religious communities on the General Synod, when it came to the end of the current Quinquennium in York in July.

During that time, he also served on the Board of Mission, latterly as vice-chair, and also on the Advisory Council for Religious Communities.

## ◆◆ Canon Sam

Brother Samuel, Guardian of Hilfield Friary, has been appointed by the Bishop of Salisbury as a non-residentiary Canon of Salisbury Cathedral to the prebendal stall of Hurstbourne & Burbage; he will be installed at Evening Prayer on Saturday 28 October in the Cathedral by Bishop David.



## ◆◆ Brothers German

During a visit to Berlin for Holy Week and Easter, Brother David Francis was able to spend a day with the Ecumenical Franciscan Brotherhood at Zehdenick in former East Germany.

It is a Franciscan community within the Old Catholic Church, founded two years ago by Brother Thaddaeus (a former OFM friar) and Brother Lukas. They live in a large farmhouse in the heart of the countryside with ten formerly homeless men. They keep pigs and hens but earn most of their income from dried flowers, which they sell in the market in Berlin.

David says there is a great spiritual hunger in former East Germany: at the last open day of the community they had ten thousand visitors! Both brothers are very keen to have closer links with SSF: the only other men's Franciscan community with which they are in full communion.



*Many hands get franciscan packed!*



*Brothers Thaddaeus and Lukas,  
Old Catholic Franciscans*

## Stigmata Festival

*Hilfield Friary  
Saturday 16 September 1995*

**Preacher and Speaker: Dr Petà Dunstan**  
*who is writing the history of the European Province of SSF*

*Bring a picnic lunch ~ tea provided ~ all welcome!*

## ◆◆ Round-up

**Marcus** has been released from the First Order . . . **Lance** and **Susan Frances** have withdrawn from the noviciate . . . **Kevin** and **Nicholas Bird** were noviced at Hilfield on 4 June . . . **Nolan Tobias**, **Philip**, **Dominic Mark** and **David** have moved to Birmingham . . . **Amos** has moved to Glasgow . . . **James Edward**, from the American Province, has returned to San Francisco . . . **Philip Bartholomew** and **David Francis** have both attended ABM conferences this year and have been successful; they begin training for ordination this autumn . . . **Felicity** moves to Newcastle-under-Lyme and **Fay** and **Beverley** move to Brixton in September . . . **Jason Antony** has moved to Hilfield . . . **Christian** moves into the Paddington house shortly . . . **Dominic Christopher** will be moving to Cambridge in September . . . **Judith Ann** is now living in Hythe.



*Hautambu brothers welcome you!  
In the next issue, we will be homing in on life in the Pacific Islands Province*



# ◆◆ Consulting Religious



Joyce Yarrow CSF

*The first profession of Brother Simeon Christopher at Plaistow*

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Brother Brian's name appeared on the last intercession leaflet, attending the PIECR; he did so, not in his role as Minister General SSF, but as representing the Australian Advisory Council for Religious Communities. Here, he writes of his experience at the gathering:

The Permanent International Ecumenical Consultation for Religious has been in operation for almost twenty years. It is a group of major superiors of Religious Orders or Congregations who are chosen by such sponsoring bodies as Unions of Religious Superiors or Religious Life Advisory Councils. They meet annually for three or four days to reflect on a theme of common concern, to worship and pray together, and to learn from each others' traditions. Nobody can normally belong to it for more than three years. The joint founders were the late Father Pedro Arrupe SJ and Brother Michael SSF.

The 1995 meeting was held in May at the Alnmouth Friary, which provided excellent hospitality and a beautiful setting. Brother Damian, representing the male superiors of the Church of England, planned the programme splendidly. There were three other Anglicans (one representing the Episcopal Church communities of the USA and another those of Australia), five Roman Catholics and two European Protestants - a mixture of men and women - including Mother Janet OHP. Unfortunately, the Orthodox delegate was unable to come. The Abbot Primate, Jerome Thiesan OSB (formerly abbot of St John's Abbey, Collegeville, USA) was the convener of the

discussions. A letter of greeting was received from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The theme of the consultation was 'our experience of God'. Visiting speakers were the Roman Catholic Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, Ambrose Griffiths OSB, who spoke about the experience of God through the charismatic renewal movement; the Anglican Bishop of Newcastle, Alec Graham talked about order and liturgy; they came together. Another speaker was the Archbishop of York, John Habgood, who gave us an enthralling two hours, talking and discussing the experience of God through poetry and science. Visits were made to Shepherds Law, where Brother Harold shared something of his experience of the eremitical life, and to Holy Island, where Canon Kate Tristram gave a most informative talk on the history of the Celtic Church and celtic spirituality. We were greatly blessed by all our speakers, but of equal importance was the sharing of our own personal experience and that of our communities and ecclesiastical traditions. Full eucharistic sharing each day was also a great blessing.

We were made aware, indeed, at Alnmouth of the unity of our consecrated life as Religious, emanating from our common baptism in Christ, and expressed through a rich variety of traditions and cultures. Rejoicing in this unity and accepting this variety, we realise that the ecumenical journey brings us closer to Christ and closer to each other in love, truth and holiness.

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# Book Reviews

*Peter Pawlowsky*  
**Christianity**  
SCM Press, £5.95

This book is part of a series called *The Basics* which seeks to set out the basic historical facts and doctrines which lie behind the world's major religions. The author is a journalist and head of the Religious Department of Australian Television.

In a hundred pages, he sets out to cover the teaching of Jesus, the formation of the Church, its doctrines, the heresies, the Religious Orders, the Reformation and the great political movements and their impact on the Church up to the present day. This is an incredible achievement, in which we are led through two thousand years of Church history and doctrine at high speed with great sweeps of the brush.

The author uses his skill as a journalist to take us through very difficult territory but with such a deft touch that early Christian doctrine and the heresies of the first four centuries are often made clear in one sentence. For those new to the Christian faith or who have often found complicated explanations difficult to grasp, this book is well worth reading.

*Edward SSF*

*Sister Frances Teresa OSC*  
**The Living Mirror**  
DLT, £7.95

This book shows us Clare as an ardent, beautiful, eminently marriageable girl who, inspired by Francis, threw away everything when she was eighteen to imitate the 'downward mobility' of the Son of God. She became a woman able to be a mirror reflecting back the love of God.

The outward difficulties and the 'minotaur within' with which she battled, were what gave her, in her maturity, the tenderness and serenity noted by her sisters. No book that I have read makes Clare so alive as a real woman who became holy by steadfastly gazing at the Christ who came not to be served but to serve.

The excerpts from Clare's writings are felicitously translated by Sister Frances Teresa and show how the teaching of the saint is as relevant now as it was in the turbulent thirteenth century. Our struggles are her struggles. When Francis died, Clare was only thirty three, and for nearly thirty more years she lived bereaved of her guide and friend. Her community at San Damiano was made up of women from all social layers, and the equality in which they lived was entirely new. We see Clare as an equal of Francis with a sense of her own vocation.

No-one would have 'enclosed' Clare had she not been convinced of her own calling, and she was as able to stand against Francis when necessary as against the pope! The joy radiating from her and her sisters following their austere path of poverty is shown in the letter sent by them to the brothers telling them of Clare's death. Even in their grief they were able to write, "We understand the dance of joy with which all the holy spirits are going to meet her."

*Elsie Felicity CSCJ*

*Helen Oppenheimer*  
**Finding and Following**  
TALKING WITH CHILDREN ABOUT GOD  
SCM Press, £9.95

This profound and honest book has great understanding of children. The author emphasises that we must not tell children half-truths or things that we do not believe ourselves, as they quickly see through us and think that faith is not important to adults. So often children are fed with myths that conflict with science, and morality that conflicts with common sense. We must be honest and admit when we do not know and suggest that we try and find out together.

Jesus is an illustration of God in action, loving people, eating with them and teaching them, and just as God was present then in Jesus, so he is present for us now and we must recognise him in other people whether we happen to like them or not. We must equip children to meet life's troubles by knowing that God is with them and can bring good out of whatever happens.

If we avoid the cross because we think it is sad or cruel we also miss out on the resurrection which is the centre of our faith, and the ascension which helps to explain how Jesus can be available to everyone now. We can find God in creation, in other people, in the Bible and in church if it is looked upon as an opportunity for praise rather than duty.

I would have liked a little more explicit description of how to help children to pray, but throughout the book it is the theological principles behind what we do and say that are emphasised.

Certainly, this is a book that needs to be read and reread carefully and then, with the author, we can hope that the next generation of Christians will have fewer misconceptions of God.

*Margaret Osmaston is the Mothers' Union librarian for the Guildford Diocese*

*William Johnston*  
**Mystical Theology**  
Harper Collins, 1995; £20

Reading this book is like drawing back heavy brocade curtains from a window only to discover that in reality the light of the sun is streaming in.

What has often seemed more mystifying than mystical is here interpreted for post-Vatican II readers by William Johnston, who follows the basic teaching of St John of the Cross and relates it to the world of today and to much non-Christian mysticism, all with the aim of teaching contemplative prayer to men and women thirsting for reality in a disillusioned age.

The scope of the book is considerable: we are taken back to the Biblical origins of mystical theology; we are led through the pages of history from Bernard of Clairvaux to Thomas Merton in a panorama that shows clearly how great a diversity of thought and belief is within God's self-revelation; the insights of Eastern teachers and mystics also have their place, though the author warns against any easy ecumenism.

The 2nd Vatican Council is seen as one of the great prophetic events of the twentieth century, leading to new insights and seeming to usher in a deeper understanding.

Mystical theology must always tread perilous ground for it deals with the spiritual realm and the devil well knows how to turn mysticism to his own ends.

So we are warned always to distinguish between a communication of God and its interpretation but we are also given a clear guiding light, for 'the union with God that mystical theology speaks of is a union through love and is the fruit of a journey of love.'

Here is a mystical theology made simple without in any way being robbed of its profundity.

*Mary Johnson, Tertiary*

*Angela Ashwin*  
**Patterns in Prayer**  
Eagle Publishing, £6.99

Angela Ashwin has chosen the unusual but up-to-date step of accompanying her book with a shortened version on tape. She is addressing all those busy people who feel cut off from God because their lives do not give time or opportunity for lengthy spells of withdrawal or silence. There is not much silence to be found in our world today.

The writer/speaker gets down to practicalities, and she reminds us that wanting God, or even wanting to want him, is enough, for he knows and understands our situation and accepts what we can offer in the way sometimes of simple salutations and expressions of our longings.

She lays stress on the importance of the 'Sacrament of the moment': we are given to trying to live in the past or in the future, hurrying through today's doings with little enjoyment or even interest, concerned only with getting things done as quickly as possible. We must surrender our day to God, and if we do that he will bless every small and tedious activity. Compare this with Brother Lawrence, of course.

She urges the full use and enjoyment of our five senses: in so doing, thanking the Creator for the things we see and hear and smell and taste and touch; we are so inclined to take it all for granted.

Thoughtful consideration is given to making use of our frustrations and anger when we feel too over-burdened with the incessant calls on our time and strength. We are shown how the sense of helpless rage can be offered as a prayer for those who are even more in need - political prisoners, hostages, those caught up in civil warfare - there is no end to the need for intercessory prayer.

All through the tape, reassurance is given of God's constant loving understanding of our situation, and of his presence with us always. The prayers, meditation and general thoughts are accompanied throughout by well-chosen and not obtrusive music - some from Taizé and ending with *The Lord Arising*.

Putting her message on tape is a very well considered move, since the distracted mother or carer would probably not think of opening a book but would welcome something different from the radio while engaged on jobs around the house or garden. Slavery in the home may be accompanied by freedom of the spirit.

*Gabriel CSF*



**John Macquarrie**  
**Invitation to Faith**  
SCM, £4.95

The chances are that if you are reading this review, Invitation to Faith is not for you. If, however, you are new to the Church and, like me, don't know where to start, this book is a great help in the way that it tackles some very basic questions without wrapping them up in jargon. The four chapters were originally presented as talks and this may account for the clarity of language used. No assumptions are made as to the reader's knowledge and brief, uncomplicated descriptions are given of any remotely 'technical' terms. Anyone who can define Marxism in twelve words has my vote!

On only fifty pages, Macquarrie covers some basic religious history from pre-Christian times, through the Enlightenment, up to the present day, to show how almost every culture has asked the questions "Who am I?" and "What is the world for?" to form their own moral codes and beliefs. He does a smart about-turn in the second chapter to look at three categories of atheism (intellectual, emotional and moral) which takes us from the big bang and current scientific thinking through Nietzsche, Dostoyevsky and on to the holocaust.

The personality of Jesus is examined through the eyes of St Paul and St John, showing the different emphasis on his humanity and divinity and, in the final chapter, he looks at what the Church as an establishment should really be about: One; Holy; Catholic; Apostolic.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Macquarrie's writing is that, although he covers such extensive ground, he hardly ever makes sweeping statements. Although his personal opinions are given (e.g. the Church should take more care in the way it teaches the gospel) he never 'lectures' his reader. This may be a whirlwind tour but the title is apt: it is a real invitation to dig deeper. It must also be one of the few times that I have scrutinised a further reading list with genuine enthusiasm!

*George Brown is a member of St Bene't's congregation in Cambridge*

**Wanda Nash**  
**At Ease With Stress**  
The approach to wholeness  
DLT, £9.95

Wanda Nash describes this book as 'essentially a do-it-yourself book'. It does not address areas of stress that need outside, professional help and which may have a pathological cause. It comprises twenty three short chapters divided into four sections, viz.

The Basics, Stress Skills for Wholeness, Common Situations of Stress and Living at Ease with Uncertainty. The first page of the introduction almost put me off the rest of the book: she used the word 'count' in different ways as if it meant the same thing; however, I am glad I persevered. Wanda Nash writes as a Christian but the techniques she describes to cope with stress can be used by anyone. The book can be used either by an individual or in a small group. The nub and content are described as the five R's: recognise, relate, release,

relax and reflect.

I enjoyed the book: it did not give me any great new insights but it was presented in a clear, logical way and would be useful as a teaching aid. The short section 'Christian Outlook', which looks at the issues discussed from a Christian perspective, could be used as reflection points on a quiet day.

As a nurse, I was slightly irritated that a description of 'stress incontinence', which the author acknowledges is a physiological condition, should be included in a book on psychological stress. Nevertheless, I would recommend it to anyone who wants to look at ways of recognising and coping with pressures in their life, while agreeing with the author when she writes: "Living is being involved with paradox, turmoil, having no complete answers, no complete safety. There is no other responsible way but to be dependent. But the more we depend upon God, the more we can affirm the faith, hope and love that are his."

*David Francis SSF*

**Andrew Linzey**  
**Animal Theology**  
SCM Press, £15

Professor Linzey deals with most of the main issues that are current causes of concern, in a methodical way. Looking at selected areas of text, I find he expresses his arguments clearly, using a catholic range of references and recognising that there must, at this stage, be more questions than answers. He treats his thesis as a contribution to a subject which has only been superficially explored; he is after all the world's first holder of a fellowship in theology and animal welfare, at Mansfield College Oxford. He provides a generous guide to the literature available.

*Andrew SSF*

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**Hannah Ward & Jennifer Wild**  
**Guard the Chaos**  
FINDING MEANING IN CHANGE  
DLT £7.95

'We read to know we are not alone', according to the film *Shadowlands* and this is certainly true of *Guard the Chaos*. It is a very pastoral book which reassures those of us who find ourselves in the chaos of change, within and without, that we are neither alone, going loopy or making a fuss in feeling deeply disturbed by the experience. Further, meaning and shape are teased out from this experience, which intrinsically feels to have neither, by setting it in the context of the community of humanity and faith, Christian and non-Christian.

The book is easy to read, written as it is in accessible language and explicitly and regularly setting out its major themes and purposes to guide the reader. It draws on some common experiences, such as having a baby, to which many will relate well. And it seeks to make some practical suggestions arising out of the analysis to give concrete help in living more creatively with change.

The thesis of the book is change: how change "reveals 'the nature of things'," how we can understand and map the process of change, how we can live creatively with the chaos and wilderness at the heart of this process and so how we manage loss; how boundaries are questioned and may be seen more hopefully and positively as thresholds. The words 'liminal/liminality' are central to the book and are used to describe the betwixt and between places inhabited by people in change, sacred places of kairos (opportunity and danger). Different disciplines are used in this exploration - psychology, social anthropology, theology - and their different rituals as ways of managing change examined.

All this is helpful in a world of rapid change and in a Church which is far from exempt from this change, but which is not uniform in its positive response to it. There is much discussion in the book of the relationship between women and the institution of the Church of England, relevant when talking of change and wilderness.

However, my criticisms of the book are these: in style it tends to wordiness and repetition, which blurs its clarity. Some of the central sections lack focus in their argument. I question whether such a polarisation of institution and 'Spirit-filled community' as the book appears to be making is valid. I am sorry that the highly creative insights of TS Eliot, RS Thomas and WH Vanstone into not knowing, silence and waiting, which the book touches on, are not developed. And finally, while I agree there is a certain 'driven' quality about our wilderness experiences (the Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness) it would have been good also to talk about call and attraction (Jesus calls the disciples to leave their nets).

Nevertheless, these are small points and should not put off anyone who is disturbed by change from using this book as a companion and guide.

*Vivien Naylor  
is a hospital chaplain*



# Brother Edgar SSF, RIP

*We pray you may bear fruit in active goodness of every kind, and grow in the knowledge of God. May he strengthen you with ample power to meet whatever comes with fortitude, patience and joy; and to give thanks to the Father who has made you fit to share the heritage of God's people in the realm of light. (Colossians 1. 10-12)*

William Kenneth Davies was a Worcester man. He was born in 1924 at Warley Woods. He was educated at King Edward's Grammar School in Birmingham and his headmaster was confident about Ken as Joint Head Prefect, for his last school report states 'he has been a splendid influence and leaves with a fine reputation for keen effort in all worthy things.' He was awarded an MA at St Peter's Hall, Oxford, and he later went on to do his theological training within the evangelical tradition at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. He served the Diocese of Worcester for twenty years between 1950 and 1969.

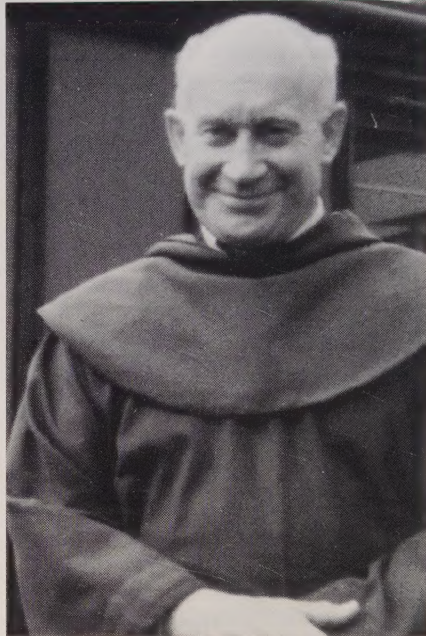
Of course, he was only eighteen when the war interrupted the pursuit of his vocation, and he served his country in the Royal Navy for four years until 1945. Was this the time when he grew in fortitude, patience and joy? For there is no doubt that Ken Davies carried within him such gentle, manly qualities that can only mature in times of adversity.

No doubt he helped to win the war, but his stories of his navy days were often told against himself: of how he lost the anchor of his boat at sea; or how he ordered another craft from its moorings, a craft with a high-powered motor, "Full speed ahead!" he cried, while the electric cables were still connected to the shore. Perhaps the loveliest of his adventures was out in the Far East, when he spotted a mine off the port bow and roused the captain's attention. "I think", replied the captain, "you'll find that's a turtle."

That's why we have so much enjoyed our Brother Edgar's company in SSF, for he was a man so very much at home in a multitude of situations and places, who used his humour and his humility to enrich the group, and he didn't mind being a bit of a clown because he knew that fun in the common life will always break the tensions. Yes, we knew Edgar as a family maker, because joy, patience and fortitude were the godly gifts in his character.

The Worcester Diocese certainly exploited his versatility. Ordained to the title of the church of St Andrew, Netherton (Dudley) the Bishop at that time then pulled him out as one of the unmarried clergy of the diocese to serve as an army chaplain with the Hussars for a four-year term, accompanying the regiment and playing rugger for them too. The Bishop then installed him as priest in charge of St Peter's Birchen Coppice (Kidderminster). It was as he was preparing to make the move in 1961 to be vicar of Stoke Bliss, with three rural churches in a remote corner of the diocese near Tenbury Wells, that he

*After a short illness,  
Brother Edgar died  
peacefully on Good Friday,  
14 April 1995.  
Brother Damian preached  
his funeral sermon at  
Hilfield on 27 April.*



had a nasty accident. The car skidded and Ken's mother, who was his passenger, lost her life.

Those years at Stoke Bliss were hard work but fruit-bearing and fulfilling. Domestically, they were no doubt draining - he was no cook! When in 1968 Brother Michael came to conduct the diocesan clergy retreat, a new light dawned as to his possible future ministry. Of course he was an Evangelical, convinced and committed. Still, his letters to Brother Michael, as the Franciscan vocation stirred in him, were full of expectation and hope. It was also very clear that Ken found decision-making almost impossibly difficult, and his arrival into SSF was delayed by letter after letter, month after month. He must be the only Brother in SSF to have attended a novice conference, as he did in 1969, before he had even physically arrived as a postulant!

Full of fortitude, patience and fun himself, he did actually beg the patience of others: and, of course, got it. How hard it was for Ken simply to allow himself to become a novice. He made it, and we knew him first as Brother Kenneth Petrock. As the time for considering first vows loomed, he needed to come away from his work in Cambridge to retire to the monastery at Glasshampton, to consider profession. This took a month of solid soul-searching. It was at that time that he asked to be known as Brother Edgar, "Because", he explained, "of the links through the King with

Worcester Cathedral" where he was first ordained.

Cambridge Friary, assisting at Saint Bene't's and at Addenbrooke's Hospital, brought him great pleasure and joy. After further service at Glasshampton and as Guardian of Liverpool, when he also served on the Chapter, he returned in the early eighties to Cambridge and to a costly ministry among the dying at the Arthur Rank Hospice.

He was given a sabbatical in September 1985 to go to Hengrave Hall and there he contributed richly to the ecumenical witness of that place and enjoyed engaging with other Religious. He equally enjoyed the following year at the CSF house at Newcastle-under-Lyme and made enormous friends with Sister Eileen Mary. I marvel at his ability to engage so fully, not only as an evangelical into the religious life, but in every place he endeared himself and showed how much he valued his friendships. He had a real gift of friendship.

At the age of sixty-five, and so at home with the sisters in Newcastle under Lyme, it may seem surprising that he felt ready to accept an invitation to go to Africa. He stayed in Harare for three years, with Brother Geoffrey, supporting the Zimbabwean Community of the Divine Compassion and as priest in charge of the church district of Warruka: three large congregations at Kambuzuma, Rugare and the new area of Warren Park. I remember accompanying Edgar one Sunday morning, worshipping in a school hall and under a tree. It didn't please him at all to learn that one of these churches was in huge debt, and that at Warren Park a new church had to be built from scratch. He was faithful and patient, of course, and Kambuzuma's debt was cleared, and Warren Park now has its own church building. It did all cost him a lot personally, carrying the strains of responsibility which told on him after two years. He then fell off his scooter and badly injured his knee when he returned to complete the contract.

Finally, Edgar became an East-ender. Plaistow Friary, in London's East End, gave him back his health and confidence, though again he needed surgery just two years ago. But oh - the wonderful sense of fun, and that conscience that made him such a faithful friar, faithful to God in prayer, in humble service and in loyalty to his family and friends, his godchildren and all his brothers and sisters in our Society.

Edgar, you have indeed "borne fruit in active goodness of every kind." You have "grown in the knowledge of God", who has supplied you "with ample power to meet whatever comes with fortitude, patience and joy." And we give thanks for you and with you to the Father, who called you home at the precise same hour on the same day as his Son died on the Cross and "who has made you fit to share the heritage of God's people in the realm of light."

Brother Edgar, may you rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.